

STATE COMMISSION ADOPTED POLICIES (updated 01/05/2015)	Sunset Date
1-01-03 (6) Request For Proposal (RFP Process)	January 05, 2018
1-03-03 (4) Commission Member Travel Expenses	January 05, 2018
1-05-04 (4) Commissioner Peer Review Policy	January 05, 2018
1-55-15 (0) State Commission Policy and Procedural Governance	January 05, 2018
1-56-15 (0) AmeriCorps State Formula Procedural Guide for Directors	January 05, 2018

See Following Pages For Complete Policy Documents:

NORTH DAKOTA STATE COMMISSION ON NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

POLICY 1-01-03 (6)

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

PURPOSE:

The primary responsibility of the State Commission is to promote the ethic of service among North Dakotans. The Commission oversees the AmeriCorps*State funds that facilitates citizens working together to meet community needs in a way that fosters personal, family, and community pride.

The following establishes the process for requesting proposals and making awards under the North Dakota AmeriCorps*State Program.

POLICY:

The State Commission on National and Community Service (State Commission) shall conduct a proper grant award process annually, following applicable federal and state regulations. Grant awards shall be made only to the extent that funds are available.

The State Commission shall implement an annual grant award process that includes an appropriate, fair, and timely

- Request for Proposal (RFP) and public notice of funding availability will be provided to a broad spectrum of entities of state and local government, nonprofits, higher education institutions, and faith-based organizations.
- Peer Review process
- Criteria-based grant selection process
- Pre-award risk assessment process

Request for Proposal

The State Commission conducts an appropriate, fair, and timely Request for Proposal (RFP) process for the AmeriCorps*State program grants annually.

A written RFP application guide will be made available for potential applicants. The RFP application guide will include instructions for required eGrants application submission, and formula funding consideration/guidance for AmeriCorps Competitive and Tribal AmeriCorps applicants who were not approved for national funding from the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS).

The grant selection criteria used in the RFP is provided by the Corporation in their annual published information and guidelines for AmeriCorps*State programs. The Commission will supplement the Corporation's major grant selection criteria with sub-selection criteria questions designed to guide the applicant toward providing the peer reviewers a stronger perspective of the of the applicants ability to successfully administer an AmeriCorps project.

Peer Review Process

State Commission staff shall review applications according to all legal, regulatory, and grant requirements.

All Peer Reviewers will complete and sign a conflict of Interest form. If a potential conflict of interest exists, the Peer Reviewer will be disqualified for being involved in the Peer Review process.

Scoring and ranking procedures will be based on the State Commission's model score sheet with modifications described in the RFP that address the Corporation and State Commission priorities.

Criteria-based Selection Process

The State Commission shall make recommendations to CNCS and shall select grantees based upon criteria contained in the Request for Proposal.

Pre-Award Risk Assessment Process

The State Commission shall conduct a pre-award risk assessment of selected grantees to ensure that grantees have the organizational capacity to provide sound programmatic and fiscal oversight; adequate budget to support program design; have a sound track record of accomplishments as an organization; well defined roles for staff and administrators; a well-designed plan or systems for self-assessment, evaluation, and continuous improvement; and commitment of applicant organization for non-federal support and sustainability.

REFERENCE:

- (0) State Commission minutes dated April 16, 2003
- (1) State Commission minutes dated April 7, 2004
- (2) State Commission Electronic Vote dated July 6, 2006
- (3) State Commission minutes dated April 22, 2009
- (4) State Commission minutes dated January 13, 2010
- (5) State Commission minutes dated January 13, 2013
- (6) State Commission minutes dated January 5, 2015

SUNSET: January 5, 2018

NORTH DAKOTA STATE COMMISSION ON NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

POLICY 1-03-03 (4)

COMMISSION MEMBER TRAVEL EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT

PURPOSE:

Regulations of the Corporation for National and Community Service Under 45 CFR Chapter XXV, Part 2550.50, (h) *Compensation for State Commission members*. States... “A member of a State Commission may not receive compensation for his or her services, but may be reimbursed (at the discretion of the State) for travel and daily expenses in the same manner as employees intermittently serving the State.

To encourage the participation and attendance of appointed members for the State Commission on National and Community Service, reimbursement of travel expenses and per diem will be provided.

POLICY:

1. **Member Expenses:** Commission members are eligible to be reimbursed for mileage, meals and lodging for regularly scheduled meetings at the current approved state rate.
 - a. To obtain the **state rate for lodging**, the North Dakota Department of Commerce may pay the lodging facility directly for Commission Member lodging expenses.
2. **Member Per Diem:** Commission members, whose employer does not reimburse them for wages or in cases where Commission members are required to pay for substitutes at their place of employment, are eligible for a daily per diem for the days in which the Commission held meetings.
 - a. Per Diem will be issued on a per-day rate upon verification of services.
 - b. Per Diem for services for portions of a day shall not be prorated. Travel days shall not be counted as days of service for the purpose of eligibility for per diem.

REFERENCE:

- (0) State Commission minutes dated June 4, 2003
- (1) State Commission Electronic Vote dated July 6, 2006
- (2) State Commission minutes dated April 22, 2009
- (3) State Commission minutes dated January 16, 2013
- (4) State Commission minutes dated January 5, 2015

SUNSET: January 5, 2018

NORTH DAKOTA STATE COMMISSION ON NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

POLICY 1-05-04 (4)

STATE COMPETITIVE AND FORMULA SELECTION PROCESS

PURPOSE:

The Corporation provides guidance in the annual Notice of Federal Funding Opportunity regarding the State Commission's responsibility for developing an application process that includes the review and selection of AmeriCorps programs for submission to the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS). The Commission's review processes should be consistent with Corporation Board approved policies and may be run concurrently with formula or other competitions.

State Commissions are also responsible for thoroughly reviewing the detailed budget and budget narrative and correcting all compliance issues before submitting competitive applications to the Corporation in eGrants.

State Commissions should set a due date for applications that allows adequate time to review the requests, analyze the budgets, and work with programs on revisions of budgets, proposed activities, and performance measurement objectives, as necessary.

State Commissions certify in eGrants that in conducting their grant review process, they ensure compliance with the National and Community Service Act of 1990 as amended, the Corporation's peer review requirements, and all state laws and conflict of interest rules.

POLICY:

The State Commission will provide the following multi-stage grant application review and selection process:

Formula Fund Applicants

- AmeriCorps Formula Fund Applicants will apply annually and be subject to the State Commission's full peer review process.
- An AmeriCorps State Formula Funds Application guide developed by the State Commission on National and Community Service will instruct formula fund applicants. This application guide will be consistent with the required selection criteria and priorities established by the Corporation under CFR 2522.475
- The State Commission will use a panel of experts (peer reviewers) to read and score the formula fund grant application narrative.
- A project evaluation rubric (application score sheet) will be used to award points based upon an applicant's program narrative, potential sustainability, fiscal responsibility and achievement level of past performance. (**presented in the annual ND AmeriCorps Formula Funds Application Instructions**)

State Competitive and Formula Selection Process (Continued)

State Competitive Applicants

- State Competitive Fund Applicants will use the Corporation's State and National Competitive application instructions and will be reviewed and approved by the State Commission before forwarding to the Corporation for competitive funding consideration.
- Successful State Competitive Fund Applicants awarded by the Corporation are approved for three years of funding and are also exempt from the State Commission's peer review process for the following 2 years. The exempt peer review status can be revoked if the applicant is underperforming and/or is not meeting the community need identified in their original funded application.
- Unsuccessful State Competitive Funding Applicants will automatically fall under the review and selection process used by the formula fund applicants
- The State Commission will conduct a final review and approval of all annual grant applications based upon priorities and preferences.

Peer Reviewer Panel Design and Process

1. Peer Reviewers are selected from a mix of practitioners, policy analysts, and experts in issue areas. They should be knowledgeable about community service and grants management.
2. The Peer Review Panel will have a minimum of three reviewers.
3. No more than half the reviewers can be commissioners.
4. None of the Peer Review Panel members can have a conflict of interest with any applications being reviewed or considered. All Peer Review Panel members will review and sign Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality Forms prior to the start of the Peer Review or receipt of any program applications.
5. All of the Peer Review Panel members will be trained prior to reviewing applications to ensure consistency in ranking and scoring.
6. The Peer Reviewers will use the criteria published in the formula application instructions to review proposals.
7. Peer Reviewers must use a review form and scoring sheet developed according to the review criteria.
8. The State Commission must certify that in conducting the grant review process, they have ensured compliance with the National and Community Service Act of 1990 as amended, the Corporation's peer review requirements and all state laws and conflict of interest rules.
9. State Commission staff is required to maintain documentation of the Peer Review Process used.

State Competitive and Formula Selection Process (Continued)

REFERENCE:

- (0) State Commission minutes dated April 7, 2004
- (1) State Commission Electronic Vote dated July 6, 2006
- (2) State Commission minutes dated November 19, 2008
- (3) State Commission minutes dated January 16, 2013
- (4) State Commission minutes dated January 5, 2015

SUNSET: January 5, 2018

**NORTH DAKOTA STATE COMMISSION ON
NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE**

POLICY 1-55-15 (0)

State Commission Policy and Procedural Governance

PURPOSE:

The purpose for this policy is to clarify how the North Dakota State Commission is governed in regards to its fiscal and programmatic activities. Fiscal and programmatic activities are defined as the administration of Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) funds that are received by the North Dakota State Commission for the purposes of supporting a State Commission Staff, and the operation of formula funded AmeriCorps sub-grantees.

POLICY:

The North Dakota State Commission will follow the fiscal and programmatic policies and procedures of the North Dakota Department of Commerce, in compliance with the North Dakota Office of Management and Budget.

Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) regulations and provisions not covered or not meeting intended restrictions, allowances or limitations as presented in the North Dakota Department of Commerce fiscal and programmatic policies and procedures documents, will defer to the CNCS level of guidance.

REFERENCE:

(0) State Commission minutes dated January 5, 2015

SUNSET: January 5, 2018

NORTH DAKOTA STATE COMMISSION ON NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

POLICY 1-56-15 (0)

AmeriCorps State Formula Procedural Guide for Directors

PURPOSE:

In relation to a major updating of the North Dakota State Commission's policies and procedures, the State Commission proposes to remove all AmeriCorps sub-grantee fiscal and programmatic policies and procedures for the purposes of updating and relocating currently relevant ones to an AmeriCorps State Formula Procedural Guide. The Procedural Guide will centralize the regulatory resources for sub-grantee Directors as well as make it possible for Commission Staff to easily initiate Corporation for National and Community Service regulatory modifications without having to create new policies/procedures and/or receive delayed approvals from the State Commission to update existing policies/procedures.

The overall intended outcome is to simplify the regulatory complexity for our sub-grantee Directors. By relocating AmeriCorps sub-grantee policies and procedures to a centralized Procedural Guide, only major policies relevant to the North Dakota State Commission, its commissioners, a competitive grant award process, and a sub-grantee procedural guidance process will remain.

POLICY:

The North Dakota State Commission will provide to all AmeriCorps State Formula Directors a Procedural Guide that will be updated at least annually and will be made available to AmeriCorps sub-grantees no later than 30 days prior to the projects' start date. This Procedural Guide will serve as the primary document where fiscal and programmatic procedures specifically created for the administration of AmeriCorps State Formula sub-grants will exist.

The AmeriCorps State Formula Procedural Guide can be updated by State Commission Staff as necessary in accordance with any required Corporation for National and Community Service regulatory changes.

The State Commission Staff will report quarterly to the North Dakota State Commission any changes to sub-grantee fiscal and programmatic procedures in the AmeriCorps State Formula Procedural Guide.

REFERENCE:

(0) State Commission minutes dated January 5, 2015

SUNSET: January 5, 2018